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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 6122
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 2254
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 0275
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0007
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHFISS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
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GENEVA FOR RMA
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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [SMIG](#) [TH](#) [LA](#)
SUBJECT: A/S SHAPIRO AND THE AMBASSADOR PRESS FOR
SCREENED-IN LIST OF HMONG

Classified By: Ambassador Eric G. John, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. During a January 13-15 visit, Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs Andrew Shapiro and the Ambassador repeatedly raised a USG request for the Thai government's list of screened-in Hmong during meetings with Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thuagsuban, Minister of Defense Prawit Wongsuwan, Ministry of Defense Permanent Secretary Apichart Penkitti, Royal Thai Armed Forces Chief of Defense Forces General Songkitti Jaggabatra, and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Panich Vikitsreth. All interlocutors said the list should be forthcoming. Other areas of discussion from Assistant Secretary Shapiro's meetings will be reported septel. End summary.

¶2. (C) During a January 15 meeting joined by the Ambassador, Assistant Secretary Shapiro told DPM Suthep that the return of the Hmong was an issue of great concern for Washington, emphasizing that the long-standing USG request for the Thai list of "screened-in" of Petchabun Hmong was very important. Suthep promised that the RTG would make the list available soon and said he understood that the Hmong who had been returned to Laos were very happy to be back in their own country. According to Suthep, the Hmong had received land from GOL and Thai officials were permitted to visit them to check on their condition. The Ambassador told Suthep that the U.S. still had not been granted access to the Hmong, as had been promised by Laos via the RTG prior to December 28 return. In addition, in view of the fact that the Hmong would likely remain in Laos longer than had been discussed prior to the return, Washington and the international community had concerns about the safety of the returnees. As such, Thai assistance in pressuring the GOL to honor the promise of access and the timeline for resettlement would be helpful. Suthep said he planned to visit Laos soon and offered to assist with USG efforts in Vientiane regarding the Hmong.

¶3. (C) A/S Shapiro during a January 14 meeting told Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Panich Vikitsreth that the U.S. had been very disappointed with the RTG decision to return the Hmong to Laos. The list of the "screened-in" population was important as it would help the USG to follow up on the safety of the Hmong. Panich referred the request to Royal

Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, and expressed RTG surprise with a January 13 op-ed on the U.S. position on the Hmong by the Ambassador. The DCM, who accompanied Assistant Secretary Shapiro to the meeting, said that the Embassy stood by the piece and told the VFM that the decision to return the Hmong might trigger strong Congressional reaction.

¶4. (C) During a January 14 meeting, Assistant Secretary Shapiro and the Ambassador reiterated the importance of the USG request for the list of "screened-in" Hmong to Ministry of Defense Permanent Secretary General Apichart Penkitti. General Apichart said that Thailand had coordinated closely with Vientiane to insure that the Hmong would be treated well and that the RTG would continue to follow up to make sure that this would remain the case.

¶5. (C) A/S Shapiro January 15 raised USG concern for the Hmong and the U.S. request for the "screened-in" list with Royal Thai Armed Forces Chief of Defense Forces General Songkitti Jaggabatra. General Songkitti promised that the list would be provided to the U.S. soon. The Royal Thai Armed Forces was following the situation closely and had sent a representative to Paaksan in Laos in order to insure that the Hmong were treated well. Songkitti said that the Lao Hmong would have access to better educational facilities than other Lao communities and would be able to live in freedom in their home country.

¶6. (U) Assistant Secretary Shapiro cleared this cable.
JOHN